

REMARKS

This is in full and timely response to the final Office Action mailed July 12, 2004. Claims 1-9 are currently pending for the Examiner's reconsideration, with claims 1 and 4 being independent.

By this Amendment, claim 1 was amended to recite that the front display means includes a transparent liquid crystal display panel for displaying images other than said designs. Support for this amendment can be found variously throughout the specification, for example, at least at paragraphs [0014] and [0046]. Support for new claims 4-9 can be found variously throughout the specification, for example, at least in original claims 1-3. No new matter was added. Accordingly, withdrawal of all rejections is requested.

By this Amendment, Applicant believes that all pending objections and rejections are overcome, and that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,934,672 to Sines et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 recites a gaming machine comprising: variable display means for variably displaying designs in a plurality of rows; and front display means disposed in front of the variable display means, wherein the front display means includes a transparent liquid crystal display panel for displaying images other than said designs through which said variable display means is able to be seen, and a light guiding plate for guiding light emitted from a light source to the entire of said liquid crystal display panel; and in the light guiding plate, transparent areas for ensuring the visibility of the variable display of said variable display means are individually formed corresponding to said plurality of rows.

Accordingly, the gaming machine recited in claim 1 has a front display means disposed in front of the variable display means. The front display means has a liquid display panel. The liquid display panel not only transmits light so that the variable display means can be seen by a user, but

the liquid display panel also displays images other than the designs, such as various game information and game effect images.

In contrast, Sines et al. '672 disclose a slot machine having an ancillary display 23 disposed in front of the reel. See col. 3, lines 33-47. This ancillary display only transmits light so that symbols of the reel periphery can be seen. Accordingly, the image displays functions differ, as Sines et al. '672 does not disclose, teach or suggest a front display means having a liquid crystal panel that transmits light so that the variable display means can be seen by a user but also displays images other than the designs, for example, various game information and game effect images.

A document can only anticipate a claim if the document discloses, explicitly or implicitly, each and every feature recited in the claim. Verdegall Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of Calif., 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Since Sines et al. '672 fail to disclose, either explicitly or implicitly, at least the above-noted feature recited in independent Claim 1, Sines et al. '672 cannot anticipate the claims. At least in view of the foregoing, claim 1 is allowable, and the rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 2-3, being dependent upon claim 1, are also allowable for the reasons above. Moreover, these claims are further distinguished by the materials recited therein, particularly within the claimed combination. Withdrawal of the §102(b) rejection is therefore respectfully solicited.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1-9 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of these remarks is courteously solicited. If the examiner has any comments or suggestions that would place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number below.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 18-0013, under Order No. SHO-0044 (80288-0044) from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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